

Amsterdam/Churchill's Guiding Principles

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Amsterdam/Churchill has seen slow but steady change over the past 100 years, from the settling of initial farms, to the development of numerous subdivisions in the core, to the operation of several local businesses and the development and use of property ongoing today. As residents of Amsterdam/Churchill discuss these changes, the questions that have arisen during this planning process are:

- How do we grow our core in a way that keeps the small town and rural nature of the area?
- What must be done to ensure that future development fits within the capacity of local public facilities and services?
- What must be done to sustain the agricultural landscapes and lifestyles on which the character of our area depends?
- What must be done to ensure that future rural residential development is compatible with the resources and lifestyle that attract people to live in our area?
- How can we continue to involve the community in the ongoing questions of growth and change?

The answers to these questions begin with the Guiding Principles presented below. These statements provide the foundation for all policies which follow, and any decisions made to amend or update this plan should be based on this foundation.

2.1 Guiding Principles

The following Guiding Principles have been used to guide specific policy direction in each of the geographic areas of the planning jurisdiction.

Values

- **Small Town Values, Rural Character, and Quality of Life.** Many residents referred to small town and church-oriented values. Many people have stated that the community is a great place to raise a family, and the strong presence of the church and quality schools added to the overall sense of good values. Quality people and their neighborliness, care and respect for others, low crime, and the quiet, calm way of life have all been discussed as important values for the

area which contribute to making Amsterdam/Churchill a great place to live.

- **Agriculture Heritage and Wide-Open Views.** Many community residents state the agricultural nature of the area adds significantly to the quality of life of the area. In addition to lending a strong sense of history to the area (note the reference to the founding of several family farms in the timeline), many residents appreciate the open spaces and views that active farms provide.

Goals

- **Infrastructure.** Numerous residents cite a need to address several infrastructure needs: an improved road system and road safety; a way to address pedestrian and bicycle needs, including sidewalks, throughout the community; and public/community water systems.
- **Increased Local Control.** Many residents express strong support for the promise of community involvement and grassroots democracy, and one of the top priorities discussed by participants was an interest in increasing local control through better planning. Additionally, tools such as zoning and incorporation were also brought up regularly, with many participants expressing a willingness and desire to explore options necessary to ensure that development occurred with the community's values in mind.
- **Agriculture and Rural Lifestyle.** Numerous residents expressed a strong desire to keep family farms in business and preserve the agricultural land, lifestyle, and heritage that helps define the Amsterdam/Churchill area.
- **Community Values.** Community values rose to the surface as a top priority for almost everyone. The church, the schools, the family-oriented atmosphere, and the community pride shown by residents were all discussed as something the Amsterdam/Churchill community needs to consciously nurture as the area grows and changes.